CHAPTER - II: Satyagraha

2.1 Introduction:

M.K. Gandhi had gone to England to study law and become a barrister. After nearly four years he completed his course in London and returned to India. He started practice in Rajkot, but did not get much success. Later he was invited to go to South Africa by a rich Muslim merchant to plead for his case. On the day after his arrival in South Africa, Gandhi attended the magistrate’s court of Durban wearing a turban. When he was told to remove his turban by the magistrate, rather than doing so, he left the court room. A few days later he took a train to Pretoria. Although he had a first class ticket he was kicked out from the first class compartment. But he refused to go to the other compartment and the train moved away.

This humiliating incident fully showed him the social position of his fellow Indians in South Africa. On 11 September, 1906, a mass meeting of the Indians was held at Johannesburg. About three thousand Indians attended the meeting and they took an oath to resist the draft of Asiatic Law Amendment ordinance, 1906, which was dubbed as the ‘Black Act’. According to this ordinance the Transvaal Government imposed each and
every Indian of the Transvaal including man, woman and child of eight years or above to be registered freshly with the Registrar of the Asiatics and take out a certificate.\(^1\) This marked the occasion when the Indians forged passive resistance weapons for the first time. This also marked the beginning of a peaceful movement which Gandhi was later to give the name Satyagraha.

2.2 Origin and evolution of satyagraha:

Although Gandhi coined the term ‘Satyagraha’, he admitted that the principle of Satyagraha was not originally conceived by him and stated the idea of Satyagraha was originally found in religious books like the Upanishads, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Gita, the Bible etc. As he said in his *Autobiography*: “The principle called Satyagraha came into being before that name was invented.”\(^2\)

Discussing the origin of Satyagraha with Joseph J. Doke, Gandhi told him thus: ‘I remember how one verse of a Gujarati poem, which as a child, I learned at school, clung to me.’ The substance of it was this: “If a man gives you a drink of water and you give him a drink in return, that is nothing. Real

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beauty consists in doing good against evil. As a child, this verse had a powerful influence over me and I tried to carry it into practice. Then came the ‘Sermon on the Mount.’ ... It was the New Testament which really awakened me to the rightness and value of Passive Résistance. When I read in the ‘Sermon on the Mount’ such passages as ‘Resist not him that is evil but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also’, and ‘Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you, that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven,’ I was simply overjoyed, and found my own opinion confirmed where I least expected it. The Bhagavad Gita deepened the impression and Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* gave it a permanent form.”

Gandhi also admitted that the principles of Satyagraha, truth and non-violence are as old as the hills. It may also be noted that Gandhi drew inspiration from various religious books, but the concept of Satyagraha is uniquely his own although it is rooted in ahimsa, the Hindu concept of non-violence.

Gandhi invented the term Satyagraha during his endless non-violent movement against racial discrimination in South Africa. In the beginning the

term ‘Passive Resistance’ was used but as the time passed and the struggle for justice advanced this phrase gave rise to confusion and was considered as the weapon of the weak. As a result, it appeared shameful to permit this great struggle to be known only by an English name. Yet he was not sure what name to be given to the movement. Hence, Gandhi announced a small prize in *Indian Opinion* for inventing the best designation. Gandhi explained the idea behind the announcement of a prize in *Indian Opinion* thus: “I then used the term ‘passive resistance’ in describing it. I did not quite understand the implications of ‘passive resistance’ as I called it. I only knew that some new principle had come into being. As the struggle advanced, the phrase ‘passive resistance’ gave rise to confusion and it appeared shameful to permit this great struggle to be known only by an English name. Again, that foreign phrase could hardly pass as current coin among the community. A small prize was therefore announced in *Indian Opinion* to be awarded to the reader who invented the best designation for our struggle.”

Maganlal Gandhi suggested the word ‘Sadagraha’ (Sat=truth, Agra=firmness) meaning firmness in a good or noble cause and won the prize. Gandhi profusely thanked Maganlal Gandhi for the term but he

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modified it as Satyagraha (force or combination of truth and love) in Gujarati as the designation of the great struggle.\textsuperscript{5}

2.3 Meaning and concept of satyagraha:

The literal meaning of Satyagraha is ‘holding on to truth’ or ‘insistence on truth’. And as Gandhi understood spiritual unity of men as the highest truth, it also implies acceptance of it, loving all and suffering for all. That is why Gandhi identified it with ‘love-force’ or ‘soul-force’.\textsuperscript{6} As Gandhi understood truth as God, Satyagraha also means the way of life of one who holds steadfastly to God and dedicates oneself to Him. He also accepted non-violence or love as the only way to attain truth. As such, for him, Satyagraha also means relentless pursuit of truthful ends by non-violent means. It is the vindication not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but one’s own self.\textsuperscript{7} In other words, there are three basic components of the concept of Satyagraha as understood by Gandhi viz. truth, non-violence and self suffering.

Ram Rattan and Ruchi Tyagi wrote: “Satyagraha, means acting according to Truth. It means fighting untruth. Satyagraha is a war and in a war nobody can be passive. Both the parties are to be active and vigilant. The only difference between traditional warfare and Gandhi’s mode of fighting is that the former is based on violence while the latter is devoid of violence.”

They defined Satyagraha “as an attitude of mind and a way of life based on the firm (Agrah) desire of vindicating just causes (truth), correcting wrongs and converting wrong-doers (criminals), by voluntary self-suffering and by patient and active use of the means which are not only non-violent, but also intrinsically just.”

Prof. Verma has also observed that Satyagraha “signifies a genuine, intense and sincere quest for truth, which is God. It means an assertion of the power of the human soul against political and economic domination. Satyagraha is the vindication of the glory of the human conscience. Conscience does not stand for abstract inwardness or withdrawal from other world. Conscience reinforces the battle for victory of

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8 Ram Rattan and Ruchi Tyagi, Indian Political Thought, (Delhi: Mayoor Paperbacks, 1999), p. 260
9 Ibid., pp. 261-262
the social good. Satyagraha is based on the invincible belief in the ultimate triumph of divine and right.”\textsuperscript{10}

Gandhi, therefore, encouraged the Satyagrahis not to be dejected when they received failure in the beginning of their endeavors, but to have faith in God. He wrote: “Satyagrahis must not be dejected. They dare not give way to despair... God will never fail them, if they have faith in Him... And victory will surely come out of their sufferings provided they are pure. God tries his votaries through and through, but never beyond endurance. He gives them strength enough to go through the ordeal. He prescribes for them.”\textsuperscript{11} This also implies the fact that many obstacles may block the path of a Satyagrahi but he is to be prepared for that, and he must have the faith that if his means are pure then ultimately victory will be his.

Gandhi did not conceive Satyagraha “as a weapon merely of the weak. It is the strongest force that one can possibly imagine or wish for and is a complete substitution for the brute force.”\textsuperscript{12} He understood Satyagraha as the weapon of the strongest and not of the weak. This is due to the fact that a

\textsuperscript{10} V.P. Varma, \textit{The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and Sarvodaya}, (Agra: Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, 1959, 4\textsuperscript{th} Edn. 1980-81), pp. 185-186

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi}, (New Delhi: Publications Divisions Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India), Vol. 30, p.266 (to be referred hereinafter as CWMG)

\textsuperscript{12} CWMG, Vol. 42, p.39)
Satyagrahi has to have the capacity to ‘combine the greatest love with the greatest opposition to wrong’. For him it also implies vindication of Truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but on one’s self. Therefore, Satyagraha can only be the weapon of the strongest and not of the weak. It may also be noted that for Gandhi Satyagraha is his last weapon against injustice, and to be used after having exhausted all other possibilities of persuasion and conciliation.\(^{13}\) Therefore, the three basic concepts of Satyagraha to Gandhi are truth, non-violence and self-suffering.

2.4 Essentials of satyagraha:

There are some essentials or basic postulates of Satyagraha like truth, non-violence, faith in God, brotherhood of man, supremacy of moral law and purity of means.\(^{14}\)

Truth: It is the core of Gandhian philosophy of Satyagraha. Satyagraha minus truth or Satya is zero. In fact, Satyagraha is based on truth or soul force. Inner voice is the voice of truth and justice. However man

\(^{13}\) Shriman Narayan, Gandhi The Man and His Thought, (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, First Print 1969, Reprint 1995), p.12

might be selfish or crooked the voice of truth resides in his innermost depth and Satyagraha tries to appeal to that voice of reason and truth.\footnote{15 Anil Dutta Mishra, op.cit., p. 22}

Gandhi emphasized how truth is essential to Satyagraha: “Its root meaning is holding on to truth; hence, truth-force. I have also called it love-force or soul-force. In the application of satyagraha I discovered in the earliest stages that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one’s opponent, but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For what appears to be truth to the one may appear to be error to the other. And patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent, but one’s own self.”\footnote{16 CWMG, Vol. 20, p. 39} He further says: “Satyagraha makes no distinction between the young and the old, the prince and the pauper. God also employs satyagraha against us. His satyagraha is unceasing. In essence, satyagraha means simply this - scrupulous regard for truth. If God did not adhere to truth, the whole world would perish in an instant. The point is that offering satyagraha is as much a duty as it is a privilege.”\footnote{17 CWMG, Vol. 55, p. 192}
Non-violence: To Gandhi the path of truth is narrow as it is straight.\textsuperscript{18}

As a result, truth and non-violence are inseparable and it is impossible to realize perfect truth so long as we are imprisoned in the moral frame without non-violence, it is not possible to seek and find truth. Hence, non-violence and truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. So Satyagraha is impossible without non-violence.\textsuperscript{19}

Faith in God: As Satyagraha is based on spiritual force, Gandhi emphasizes that a Satyagrahi must be a believer in God. He said: "The fact is that Satyagraha presupposes the living presence and guidance of God. The leader does not depend on his own strength but on that of God. He acts as the Voice within guides him."\textsuperscript{20}

Brotherhood of Man and Faith in the Goodness of Man: Gandhi believed in the principle of one universal soul. All humanity is one family. He often said: "Satyagraha is nothing more than what we practise in our quarrels and wrongliness within the family. However sharply and violently we may disagree in the family, we never use violence."\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Young India}, Vol. 42, 2.8.1928, p. 307
\textsuperscript{21} Cited in Anil Dutta Mishra, op.cit., p. 23
brotherhood of man means that we are one of another. It means that you cannot injure your neighbor without injuring yourself or vice-versa. Hence, the entire edifice of Satyagraha rests on the faith in the goodness of man. Satyagraha aims at change of heart through non-violent, noble and friendly action.\textsuperscript{22}

Supremacy of Moral Law and Purity of Means: Satyagraha does not depend upon physical or brute force. It is based on moral force the force of truth and justice, the force of self purification and self-suffering, love and service, courage and discipline. Gandhi said: “Purity of means is based upon the recognition the supremacy of moral law.”\textsuperscript{23} Therefore, the entire gamut of the philosophy of ‘Satyagraha’ is based on the fact that truth and morality alone can be victorious, and we cannot adopt immoral principles to create a moral society. Hence, Gandhi made Satyagraha ‘the moral equivalent of war.’ It is a way of life based on the laws of love and holiness.\textsuperscript{24} However, insistence on moral means does not imply that evil, injustice, tyranny and exploitation are to be tolerated. On the other hand, he advocated that evil

\textsuperscript{22} Cited in Anil Dutta Mishra, op.cit., p. 24
\textsuperscript{23} Cited in Anil Dutta Mishra, op.cit., p. 23
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
must be resisted and eliminated through means that are in consonance with morality, not with hate, war, violence and ill-will.

2.5 Objectives of satyagraha:

Satyagraha aims at giving a moral basis to politics, fighting injustice and tyranny, settling social, political and economic disputes, establishing effective democracy, laying the foundations of new social order based on justice and equality, paving the way for world peace, etc. The Satyagrahi fights with a view to bilateral and not unilateral victory and aims at the integration and not suppression of legitimate differences.25

A Satyagrahi will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth and violence by non-violence.26 The Satyagrahi, a man conscious of the working of his soul force should treat his opponent as a member of his family. He should adopt domestic method which makes the resolution of the conflict easy by removing differences.27

26 M.K. Gandhi, *Young India*, 8.8.1929, pp. 263-64
27 Ajay Shanker Rai, op. cit., p. 49
The idea underlying in the Satyagraha is to convert the wrongdoer, to awaken the sense of justice and to show also that without the co-operation, direct or indirect of the wronged, the wrongdoer cannot do the wrong intended by him. If the people in either case are not ready to suffer for their causes, no outside help in the shape of Satyagraha can possibly bring true deliverance.\textsuperscript{28}

In Satyagraha, the opponent is not an enemy to be destroyed or defeated. He is a person who has the right to co-exist with the Satyagrahi. He is, therefore, to be helped to become a better man for himself and his society. A Satyagrahi is, therefore, required to enter into reasoning and discussion with his opponent in order to awaken the sense of justice in him. In case the Satyagrahi fails to persuade him through reason and discussion, he is to undertake self-suffering instead of inflicting suffering on his opponent. The Satyagrahi should be ready to give up his life rather than take the opponent’s life.\textsuperscript{29}

In the practical field, the purpose of Satyagraha is to substitute willing obedience for forced obedience and voluntary co-operation for involuntary

\textsuperscript{28} M.K. Gandhi, \textit{Harijan}, 10.12.1926, p. 369

\textsuperscript{29} Ajay Shanker Rai, op.cit., p. 49
co-operation. This is made possible by trying to understand each other's view point and to accept or reject it willingly and voluntarily.\textsuperscript{30}

2.6 Forms of satyagraha:

There are different techniques of Satyagraha. They may take the form of non-cooperation, civil disobedience, hijarat, hartal, strike, peaceful picketing and fasting. They may be expressed as follows:

1. Non-Cooperation: It is a non-violent means to secure the co-operation of the opponent with truth and justice. Gandhi remarked that behind his Non-cooperation there is always the keenest desire to co-operate with the worst opponents.\textsuperscript{31} It is not a passive state but an intensely active, more active than physical resistance or violence.\textsuperscript{32} Non-cooperation means withdrawal of co-operation from the state by the people because the state has become corrupt. Gandhi said: “Even the most despotic Government cannot stand except with the consent of the governed, whose consent is often forcibly procured by the

\textsuperscript{30} Ram Rattan and Ruchi Tyagi, op. cit., pp. 264-65
\textsuperscript{31} M.K. Gandhi, \textit{Young India} II, p. 517
\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Young India}, 25.8.1920, p. 2
despot. Immediately the subject ceases to fear the despotic fear, his power is gone."

Non-cooperation is the activization of love for the redress of wrongs. It aims to touch the heart of the opponent. It is based on love and there is no room for hatred and violence. It can be practised both at the domestic and national levels. If a father does an injustice, the children can non-cooperate by leaving the parental home and if a Government does a grave injustice, the subjects must withdraw co-operation wholly or partially to wean the ruler or Government.

2. Civil Disobedience: It is an active, strong and extreme form of Satyagraha. It is a rebellion without the element of violence in it. It is a civil breach of immoral laws. A civil resister simply ignores the authority of the state. Gandhi said: "Disobedience to be civil has to be absolutely non-violent, the underlying principle being the winning over of the opponent by suffering, i.e. love."

33 V.D. Mahajan, Modern Indian Political Thought, (New Delhi: S. Chand and Company Pvt. Ltd., 1987), p. 334
34 Young India, 3.11.1921, p. 346
Civil Disobedience as advocated by Gandhi can be divided into two types, viz. (i) Aggressive or Assertive or Offensive Civil Disobedience and (ii) Defensive Civil Disobedience.

Aggressive or Assertive or Offensive Civil Disobedience refers to disregard of laws relating to revenue or regulation of personal conduct for the convenience of the state, although such laws in themselves inflict no hardship, and do not require to be changed. Defensive Civil Disobedience refers to formation of volunteer corps for peaceful purposes, holding of public meetings, publication of articles not contemplating or inciting to violence in spite of prohibitory orders, and peaceful picketing.\textsuperscript{35}

Gandhi compared the life of a body a civil resisters to an army. He said: "A body of civil resisters, is therefore, like an army subject to all the discipline of a soldier, only harder because of want of excitement of an ordinary soldier's life."\textsuperscript{36} And Civil Disobedience is to be practised only by a selected few and not by the rank and file of the people. He said: "As a civil resistance army is or ought to be free from passion because free from the

\textsuperscript{35} V. P. Varma, op. cit., p. 178

\textsuperscript{36} Young India, 10.11.1921, p. 362
spirit of retaliation, it requires the fewest number of soldiers. Indeed one perfect civil resister is enough to coin the battle of right or wrong."

3. Hijrat: It is also a form of Satyagraha which means a voluntary exile from the permanent place of residence. Gandhi supports Hijrat and recommends for those who feel oppressed, cannot live without loss of self-respect in a particular place and lack the strength that comes from true non-violence or the capacity to defend themselves violently. He said: "Tyranny is a kind of plague and when it is likely to make us angry or weak it is wisdom to leave the scene of such temptation."

In 1928 Gandhi advised the Satyagrahis of Bardoli to migrate, and in 1939 of Limbdi, Junagardh and Vithalgadh to migrate. Again in 1935, he advised the Harijans of Karitha to migrate since the caste Hindus of the place were regularly terrorizing over them and this had caused extreme despondency among the Harijans.

Justifying this form of Satyagraha Gopinath Dhawan says: "Obviously the bravest course of Satyagrahis would be cheerfully to suffer the worst"

37 Ibid.
38 Quoted by V.P. Varma, op.cit., p. 173
39 Harijan, 20.5.1939, p. 133
expression and melt the heart of the evil-doer. But this lacking, there is nothing wrong, dishonourable, or cowardly in self-imposed exile. It is non-violent way out of an unbearable plight.\textsuperscript{40}

4. Hartal: It is a peaceful stoppage of work which is another form of Satyagraha recommended by Gandhi. Abstention from work should be the result of persuasion and other non-violent methods of propaganda. It is a way to practise non-cooperation. It is a device through which satyagrahis try to know the reactions of the public against particular act or policy of the government. But hartals should not be frequent; otherwise they would cease to be effective.\textsuperscript{41} Hartal is to be organized in a systematic manner. A day prior to the hartal, the social workers or the harta\textsuperscript{is} shall undertake the task of educating the people about the evils of a particular act of Government and emphasize the need for observing hartal on a particular day as a mark of protest. But on the day of hartal there shall no persuasion by the volunteers to observe hartal. Peaceful hartals are not possible if the people are not properly educated about the nature and objective of hartal. On that day there

\textsuperscript{40} Harijan, 5.10.1935, p. 238

\textsuperscript{41} Young India, I, p. 258
shall be peaceful processions and meetings. A successful hartal is one which is spontaneous and peaceful. 42

Gandhi laid down certain limitations in the operation of hartals. First of all there should be no hartal without a genuine cause. Secondly, political hartals should not be mixed up with economic or social hartals. Political hartals have a definite place in non-violent action. Finally, the sections/organizations and unions should not paralyse the life of the whole nation on the day of hartal observed by them. It is the national organization with its membership extending to all the sections of the society which alone has the right to give call for national hartal. 43

5. Strike: It is another form of Satyagraha, a well known weapon of the working class. Strike is an inherent right of the working man or woman for the purpose of securing justice. The area of strike is limited up to public offices and factory or industry. Gandhi has laid down a few conditions of strike as well: First of all there should be no strike without a real grievance. Secondly, there should be no strike, if the persons concerned are not able to support themselves out of their own savings or engaging in some temporary

occupations, such as, carding, spinning and weaving. Strikers should never depend upon public subscriptions or other charity. Finally, the strikers must fix an unalterable minimum demand, and declare it before embarking upon the strike.\footnote{44}

Gandhi views that industry is a joint enterprise of the workers and the capitalists and both of them are trustees. The strikers should put forward their demands that must be within the reach of the capitalists to concede.

6. Peaceful picketing: Discussing Gandhi’s view on peaceful picketing, Ajay Shanker Rai wrote: “Peaceful Picketing is another way to practise non-cooperation, a non-violent technique to put up social, economic and political pressure upon the opponent to create political consciousness and spirit of Swadeshi, always persuasive and never coercive. Picketing in its inherent nature aims to attain peace by persuading and converting the wrong doer or the opponent without any application of violence. Its aim is to protect against certain evils or abuses. Speech is the only weapon and way of picketing, to be used gently and inoffensively, because the picketers are like the watchman. It has also a great educative value.”\footnote{45}

\footnote{44} Quoted by V.P. Varma, op. cit., p. 172.
\footnote{45} Ajay Shanker Rai, op. cit., p. 82
Gandhi in his article ‘How to do picketing’ laid down certain rules to conduct picketing:

(i) At least ten women are required for picketing a liquor or foreign cloth shop. They must choose a leader among themselves. (ii) They should all first go in a deputation to the dealer and appeal to him to desist from carrying on the business and present him with leaflets setting forth facts and figurer regarding evil of such business. (iii) If the dealer refuses to suspend such business the picketers should assemble near the shop leaving the passage free and make personal appeal to the customers. The picketers should present leaflets which are understood by the dealer. (iv) The volunteers should carry banners or boards displaying the appeal in bold letters indulging in such practices. (v) Volunteers should be as far as possible in uniforms. (vi) Volunteers should at frequent intervals sing suitable bhajans bearing on the subject. (vii) Volunteers should prevent compulsion or interference by man. (viii) On no account should vulgarity, abuse, threat or unbecoming language be used. (ix) The appeal must always be to the head and heart, never to fear or force.46

46 Cited in V.P. Varma, op.cit., p. 174
Gandhi had limited picketing to liquor and foreign cloths only. To be successful in picketing, Gandhi advised that the volunteers should be led by women and men should only help and organize a picketing. Again their record of receipts and expenditures should be audited periodically by men under the supervision of women. Since picketing is a non-violent means, it should avoid intimidation, discourtesy and hunger strikes.

7. **Fasting**: Like the great teachers of the world, such as Muhammad, Buddha and Jesus, Gandhi would begin to fast whenever he was faced with a moral crisis. Gandhi believed that he “derived extraordinary powers for the good of humanity and attained clarity of vision through fasting and prayer.”

Fasting is the ultimate, most potent and infallible weapon in the armory of a Satyagrahi. Generally speaking fasting is of three types. First, fasting for bodily purification which is a part of nature cure; second, fasting for penance for the attainment of the spirit’s supremacy over the flesh, and third, fasting of a Satyagrahi.

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47 M.K. Gandhi, *To Hindus and Muslims*, cited in V. P. Varma, op.cit., p. 172
Fasting is a means of resisting injustice and of converting the evil doer. It is an appeal to the wrong doer’s better nature with the object of evoking the best in him. As such, it is the higher expression of the prayer of a pure loving heart. As a technique of influencing the masses, its effectiveness is due to the fact that man’s mind is influenced not through speech and writings but only by something which they understand well, namely suffering which is the language of heart. Fasting, according to Gandhi should be used as the last resort when all other techniques of Satyagraha have been explored but have proved failed. And fasting unto death is the final weapon in the hands of a Satyagrahi which Gandhi considered as an integral part of Satyagraha technique and as the greatest and most effective weapon in the armoury of it.

Gandhi has laid down certain qualifications for a person who is willing to resort to this form of Satyagraha. Mere physical capacity to fast is no qualification at all. The person must possess spiritual fitness and a clear vision. It requires faith because anger, impatience, selfishness, etc. makes the fasting violent. A Satyagrahi should have the confidence that God will

48 *Gandhi Marg*, Vol. 20, No. 4, Jan-March, 1999, p. 466
49 Ibid., p. 416
grant him the necessary strength. Gandhi believed in the importance of fasting for a Satyagrahi since it gives: “(i) the requisite discipline, (ii) the spirit of self-sacrifice, (iii) humility, and (iv) resoluteness of will.”

2.7 Qualifications of a satyagrahi:

A Satyagrahi is not to harbor anger, is to suffer the anger of the opponent, is not to retaliate or insult of his opponent. As Satyagraha depends upon the stage of moral development of a Satyagrahi, he is to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth and himsa by ahimsa. Gandhi wrote in *Young India*, the important qualifications and rules for a Satyagrahi. They are: (i) A Satyagrahi, i.e., a civil resister will harbor no anger. (ii) He will suffer the anger of the opponent. (iii) In so doing he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate, but he will not submit out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger. (iv) When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest, and he will not resist the attachment or removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by authorities. (v) If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it,

even though in defending it he might lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate. (vi) Non-retaliation excludes swearing and cursing. (vii) Therefore a civil resister will never insult his opponent and also not take part in many of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of ahimsa.\textsuperscript{52}

A Satyagrahi must be a well disciplined soldier. He is expected to lead a courageous, fearless and truthful life. He is expected to lose everything, even loss of money or the good opinion of others but should hold to the truth to the last. Gandhi said: “A Satyagrahi will adhere to truth to the last. If we want to be Satyagrahis, we must have the courage to range ourselves against the Government or our own community. … We must be fearless about everything. We must have no fear of violence to our person or of loss of money. We may even lose the good opinion of others. We may let everything go. But we must not allow truth to forsake us. This and this alone is fearlessness.”\textsuperscript{53}

Another qualification for a Satyagrahi should be that of habitual wearing of Khadi. A Satyagrahi must carry out with a willing heart all the rules of discipline as may be laid from time to time.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{52} CWMG, Vol. 48, p. 340
\textsuperscript{53} CWMG, Vol. 8, pp. 329-330
\textsuperscript{54} Gandhī Marg, Vol. 20, No. 4, Jan-March 1999, p. 464
2.8 Satyagraha and passive resistance:

Gandhi took pains to distinguish between 'Satyagraha' and 'Passive Resistance' to bring out a clear meaning of Satyagraha. Satyagraha differs from passive resistance as the North Pole is from the South Pole. Passive resistance has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end. Satyagraha on the other hand, has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest, and excludes the use of violence in any shape or form.\(^{55}\) Therefore, Satyagraha is always the weapon of the strongest whereas passive resistance is always a weapon of the weak. Gandhi wrote in *Young India*: “Passive resistance is used in the orthodox English sense and covers the suffragette movement as well as the resistance of the nonconformists. Passive resistance has been conceived and is regarded as a weapon of the weak. Whilst it avoids violence, being not open to the weak, it does not exclude its use if, in the opinion of a passive resister, the occasion demands it.”\(^{56}\)

\(^{55}\) CWMG, Vol. 20, p. 39

\(^{56}\) CWMG, Vol. 22, p. 452
In a letter to Madanpalli (P.O.) dated 25.1.1920 Gandhi made a clear distinction between Satyagraha and Passive Resistance. He wrote: "I have drawn the distinction between passive resistance as understood and practised in the West and Satyagraha before I had evolved the doctrine of the latter to its full logical and spiritual extent. I often used ‘passive resistance’ and ‘Satyagraha’ as synonymous terms; but as the doctrine of satyagraha developed, the expression ‘passive resistance’ ceases even to be synonymous, as passive resistance has admitted of violence as in the case of suffragettes and has been universally acknowledged to be a weapon of the weak. However passive resistance does not necessarily involve complete adherence to truth under every circumstance. Therefore it is different from Satyagraha in three essentials: Satyagraha is a weapon of the strong; it admits of no violence under any circumstance whatever; and it ever insists upon truth. I think I have now made the distinction perfectly clear."\(^{57}\)

2.9 Satyagraha and human nature:

Gandhi’s advocacy of Satyagraha and his understanding of human nature are closely related. The concept of Satyagraha is born in the mind of

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Gandhi out of his understanding of human nature and how it could be trained and molded. According to Gandhi, man is a mixture of good and evil. The difference is only of a degree. He also believed in the animal ancestry of man. He said: "We were, perhaps, all originally brutes. I am prepared to believe that we have become men by a slow process of evolution from the brute."\(^{58}\)

Gandhi came to understand that man is by nature, unlike other creations, rational. He has a part of God in him which he talked of as "God who dwells in us."\(^{59}\) Again, he said: "I believe in human nature. Everyone has a soul and can exercise soul-force as much as I. You can see the soul-force in me because I have ever kept my soul wide-awake by humbly entreating it, or beating a drum or dancing before it. Yours may not be equally awake, but we are all equal in our innate capacities."\(^{60}\) This spiritual presence of God in man makes him possible to know about good or evil and also possible to be transformed from evil to good by means of love or non-violence. In other words, man is by nature, responsive to the advances of love. He has an unfailing positive responsiveness to the approach of love. As

\(^{58}\) M.K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, 2.4.1938, p. 65

\(^{59}\) I bid.

\(^{60}\) CWMG, Vol. 30, p. 280
such the evil in him can be converted to good through gentle persuasion, the very tenet of Satyagraha. There is no exception to this nature of man; even the tyrants do not lack their feeling of humanity as proved by their affection towards their family members.

Man as understood by Gandhi is concerned with Truth. Because for him God is within all men in the form of the soul. But Gandhi has also understood God as truth. And, just as man is irrevocably concerned with the soul or God within him, so also he is irrevocably concerned with truth.

Besides, for Gandhi, the ultimate purpose of human existence is his moral development. However, this will not be possible if we shun the truth. There can be no moral development, that of the individual as well as that of the society, in the absence of the truth. Therefore, man came to be irrevocably concerned with Satyagraha. These considerations further show that co-relation between Gandhi’s understanding of human nature and his insistence on the practice of Satyagraha. In fact, Gandhi once told Vallabhai Patel in a discussion on 6 September 1932: “The root of Satyagraha lies in faith in human nature, in the faith that it will be possible to melt the cruelest of men.”61 He believed human nature as capable of believing “in truth and

61 CWMG, Vol. 57, p. 438
non-violence as his creed and therefore have faith in the inherent goodness of human nature which he expects to evoke by his truth and love expressed through his suffering.\textsuperscript{62}

2.10 Relevance of satyagraha:

The relevance of Gandhi's Satyagraha in the present age is tremendous as it ultimately stands for liberation of man from oppression and injustice, inequality and discord and disharmony. It also stands for building a society containing individuals with its imperatives of simple living, and constructive programme. These imperatives of Satyagraha are of utmost relevance in the existing set up of things for the emergence of a non-exploitative society. Satyagraha guides individuals to follow a simple life with fewer wants because multiplications of wants in life mean unnecessary involvement in complications and exploitative business.

The cultivation of non-possession by the rich people, according to Gandhi, in the Indian society is a step toward silent revolution to bring about peace and bread to all. Gandhi has rightly observed: "If only they (the rich

\textsuperscript{62} CWMG, Vol. 30, p. 280
people) keep their own property within moderate limits, the starving will be easily fed, and will learn the lesson of contentment along with the rich.”

R.R. Diwakar has boldly stated the relevance of Gandhi's Satyagraha thus: “The relevance of Satyagraha, both as a way of life and as a weapon for evolutionary social change, need not now be in doubt when it has been used successfully by the Negroes in the U.S.A under the able guidance of the late Dr. Martin Luther King. Though its use in an international conflict has yet to be tried, one can hazard the statement that non-alignment, moral pressure by non-aligned powers, and the economic and other sanctions which the U.N.O. often thinks of are along the line of non-violent resistance to evil and injustice.”

Discussing the relevance of Gandhi in the 21st century, Manoranjan Sarkar says: “The objectives of Satyagraha movement were for realizing human rights through the process of peaceful demonstration thus hitting the conscience of the wrongdoers, oppressors and maintaining maximum restraint even in the teeth of provocations. Satyagraha ... would bring

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change of heart of the oppressors (wrongdoers) and would compel them to bring an honorable compromise and solution with the wronged group."  